

9 JUN 1964  
By: *DOE/CH/1 5/10/64*  
LC; Date: *1/1/66*

Cele

General Curtis E. LeMay  
Chief of Staff, USAF

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Dear Curt

*Noted By: The Vice  
Chief of Staff*

In response to a request from Gen Ferguson, the Nuclear Panel of the USAF Scientific Advisory Board has reviewed the current status of Project ORION and is submitting the attached report for your consideration.

You will note that the Panel has expanded their area of interest to include the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory Project HELIOS. You may be especially interested in the comments in the Panel report on Project HELIOS which is a relatively new idea that makes use of contained nuclear explosives of very low yield as opposed to much larger yields which are employed in the ORION concept. In regard to ORION, the Panel has taken a positive approach to following this concept and has made the following comments:

The U. S. and USSR are spending billions of dollars per year on space, which will surely generate a constant flow of new knowledge and a high level of interest and imagination. In such an atmosphere there is certainly a chance that a clear-cut need will emerge for a propulsion system with a high specific impulse and large thrust. If that should happen, it would be desirable to have at least one approach sufficiently far advanced in research and development, so that the U. S. could proceed quickly and confidently toward that goal. ORION is one of the very few concepts that hold promise for this purpose. For these reasons the Panel feels that the decision should be made to pursue ORION through its next logical step.

If a need for ORION should eventuate, the Panel believes that the need is as likely to be in the peaceful exploration of space as in the military use of space. For this reason, the Panel feels that, in the future, sponsorship and funding of ORION should come jointly from NASA and the Air Force as well as the AEC. The Panel recommends that the Air Force try to bring about this change.

Sincerely

*21*  
*cc*  
H. GUYFORD STEVER  
Chairman  
USAF Scientific Advisory Board

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

*C/S has noted*



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DoD Dir., Mar. 11, 1981  
DoD Dir., Dec. 30, 1983  
By: *LC* Date: *1/1/66*

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9 JUN 1964  
DOE LCH 5/10/64  
By: FW LC; Date: 11/64

General Curtis E. LeMay  
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About Jol

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Privacy Terms

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